SIDON

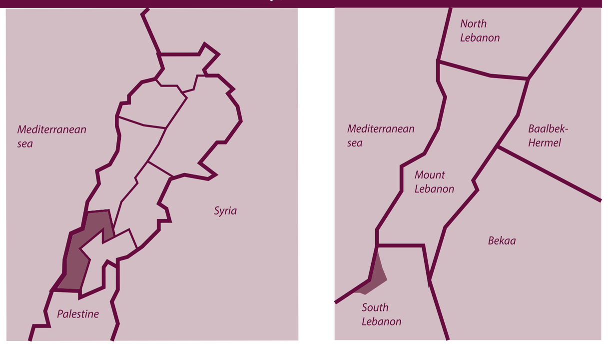
THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

صيدا
مسار الفينيقيين

LAU Lebanese American University — Louis Cardahi Foundation — Ministère Libanais du Tourisme — The Phoenicians' Route, Cultural route of the Council of Europe / Itinéraire culturel du Conseil de l'Europe — Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe

INTRODUCTION

Sidon is known for its multi-layered sea citadel. Founded in the fourth Millennium B.C. It is one of three major port city-states of the Canaanite/Phoenician epoch, cited 35 times in the Old Testament. In its long history, it has been home to the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, Mamelukes and Ottomans.

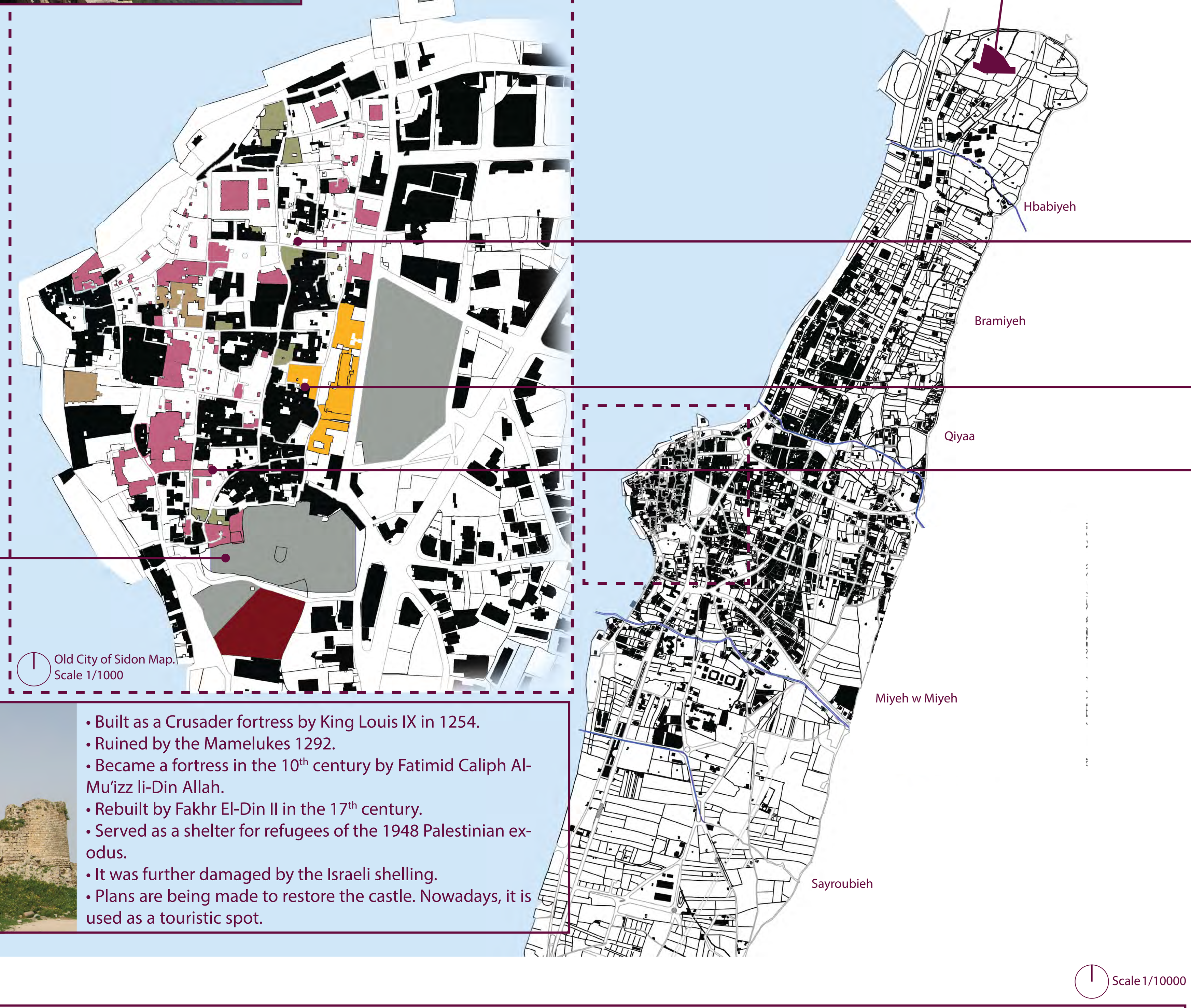


HISTORICAL MAPPING



Sidon's Sea Castle

- Constructed by the Crusaders in 1228 to defend Sidon's harbor.
- Destroyed by the Mamelukes in 1291 to prevent the Crusaders from re-establishing.
- Restored by Fakhr El-Dine II in the early 17th century.
- The small domed mosque was erected by the Ottomans.
- The narrow causeway to the castle was added by the Arabs.
- Currently it is a touristic spot and historical landmark in Sidon.





- Built as a Crusader fortress by King Louis IX in 1254.
- Ruined by the Mamelukes 1292.
- Became a fortress in the 10th century by Fatimid Caliph Al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah.
- Rebuilt by Fakhr El-Din II in the 17th century.
- Served as a shelter for refugees of the 1948 Palestinian exodus.
- It was further damaged by the Israeli shelling.
- Plans are being made to restore the castle. Nowadays, it is used as a touristic spot.

Castle of St. Louis

Legend

- Neolithic Age 24,000 – 3000 B.C.
- Phoenician Civilization (Iron Age) 1200 – 333 B.C.
- Crusader Period 1090 - 1099 A.D.
- Mameluke Period 1291- 1516 A.D.
- Ottoman Period 1516 - 1917 A.D.
- Lebanese State 1943 - Present

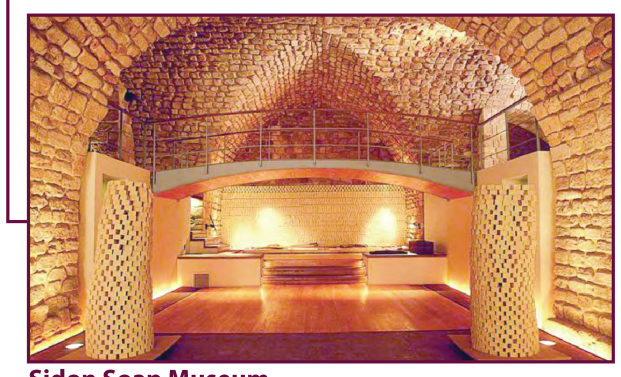


Temple of Echmoun



- Ali Hammoud occupied by the Hammouds in1721 A.D.
- Youssef Debbane 1800.
- Debbane Family and Sacy Family.
- Raphaël Youssef Debbané restored the palace in 1902.
- It became a home to Palestinian refugees who fled from the camps in the south, staying there until 1982 when Israel bombarded the area. Later, the house was destroyed.
- The Debbané Foundation carries out repair work. To preserve the palace's historical and artistic significance. The foundation plans to undertake its restoration properly and have it designated as a museum.
- Present: Museum.

Debbane Palace

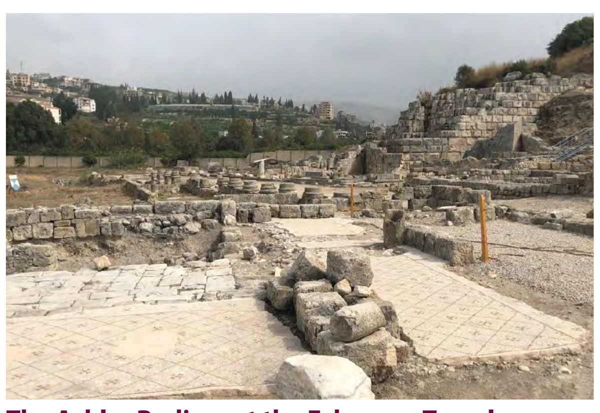


Sidon Soap Museum



Khan Al-Franj

HISTORICAL FINDINGS: TEMPLE OF ECHMOUN

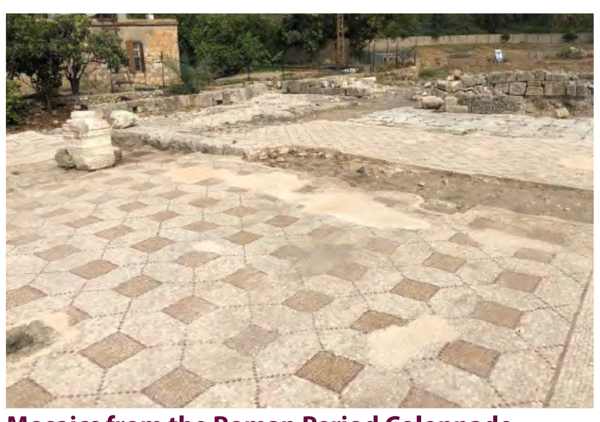


The Ashlar Podium at the Echmoun Temple:
The pyramidal structure was superimposed during Persian rule by a massive ashlar podium constructed from heavily bossed limestone blocks that measured more than 3 metres across by 1 metre thick, which were laid down in courses 1 metre high. The terrace, top of the podium, was once covered by a Greco-Persian style marble temple, probably built by artisans around 500 B.C. The marble temple has been reduced to a few remaining stone fragments due to theft.



Throne of Astarte at the Echmoun Temple:
A large stone throne carved of a single block of granite with Egyptian style. It is flanked by two sphinx figures and surrounded by two lion sculptures.

The throne, attributed to the Sidonian goddess Astarte, rests against the chapel wall, which is embellished by relief sculptures of hunting scenes. The important Astarte basin lost its function during the second century A.D. and was filled with earth and statue fragments.

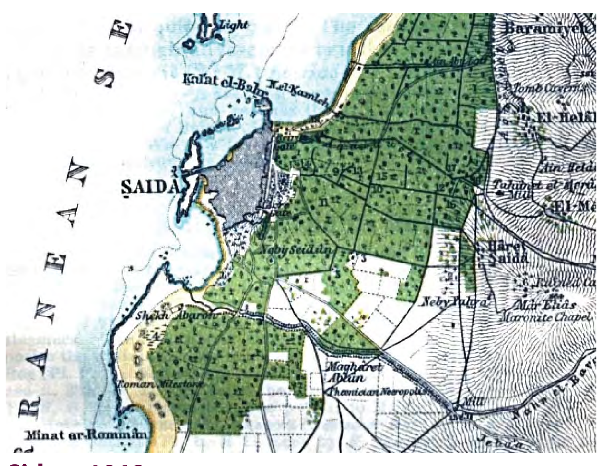


Mosaics from the Roman Period Colonnade



Lion Sculpture Placed on the Side of the Throne of Astarte

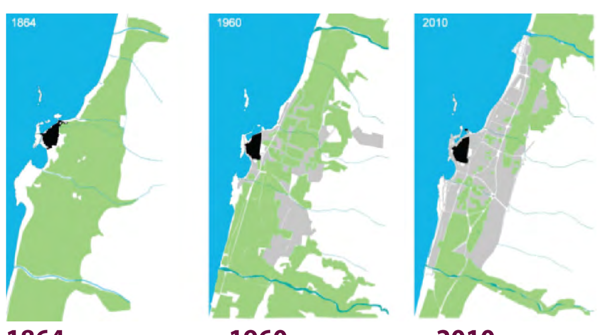
URBAN MORPHOLOGY



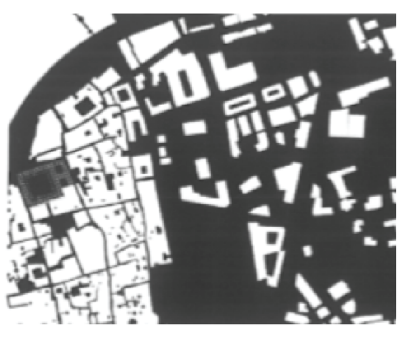
Sidon, 1912



Sidon, 2014
Overall historical mapping accounts for the rapid loss of agricultural land. The average loss of agricultural landscape can be calculated at a pace of 9 ha every two years.



1864 **1960** **2010**



The discontinuity of urban morphology between the old city and the new city, distinguishing between the contrast, from the organic to space division.

CHRONOLOGY OF MAIN EVENTS

3000 - 1200 B.C. - Bronze Age
- 3000 - 2000 B.C.: City founded by Sidon during the Early Bronze Age.
- 2000 B.C.: Its port developed, and trade opened on to the world.
- 15th- 14th century B.C.: The city's influences extended to the entire Mediterranean.
- 12th - 10th century B.C.: Sidon became an important commercial center with international trade.

900 - 550 B.C. - Assyrian and Babylonian
887 B.C.: The King of Assyria appeared on the Mediterranean coast and exacted tribute from the Phoenician cities.

330 - 550 B.C. - Persian Period
380 B.C.: Golden Age under the Persians, as capital of their first province including Syria, Palestine, and Cyprus.

330 - 64 B.C. - Hellenistic Age
- 334 B.C.: Alexander the Great conquers the city.
- Stadium Agora Baths and Temple of Echmoun were built.

64 B.C. - 635 A.D. - Roman and Byzantine Period
- The city acquired a colony statue.
- It became a republic under the Roman rules.
- 551 A.D.: Sidon became a great center for the production and trade of skills.

636 - 696 A.D. - Islamic Period
- 636 A.D.: Under the Islamic rule, the territory was divided into funds.
- Sidon was a part of the Damascus fund.

1090 - 1099 A.D. - Crusader Period
The city became part of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

1187 A.D. - Ayyubid Period
The Crusaders were defected, as the battle of Tiberius Saladin captures it.

1291- 1516 A.D. - Mameluke Period
The Mamelukes controlled the city.

1516 - 1917 A.D. - Ottoman Period
- 1516: Ottomans took over and Sidon was enriched with monuments such as mosques, madrasas, khans, and hamams.
- 1594 - 1683: Center of power for Fakhreddine. Sidon was rebuilt by Fakhreddine in the 17th Century.
- 1660 - 1840: Center of Wilaya and it became a capital.
- 1791: French driven out of Sidon by Al-Jazzar.
- 1831: Bombardment during Ottoman European companion to remove Bachir Shihab II.
- 1873: Shakrieh Road built to the east and the old city opened.

1920 - 1943 - French Mandate
The French Mandate integrated into Great Lebanon.

1943 - Lebanese State
- 1943: Riad El-Soloh major public works.
- 1948: Israel occupation of Palestine and the first refugee camp in Sidon.
- 1975 - 1990: Lebanese Civil War.
- 1982 - 1985: Israel occupation, and destruction of sea front of the old city.

EVALUATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

Going through the Temple of Echmoun, the first impression was the difficulty to find and untended. First of all, the road towards the temple is very narrow and in bad condition. Therefore, it was a hard time to find the temple. Moreover, the sign mentioning the site was even harder to find, including no parking spaces.

When entering, the keeper is the only one seen, including him being lacking the knowledge of the place and not considered a proper guide.

Coming to the actual ruins and site, they are in bad condition due to lack of money for restoration. The place was neglected, full of old shrubs and plants, some of which even grow over the historic ruins.

Second, the old city of Sidon. The most known place full of historical sites in Sidon. This historical place, now seen as a dirty place with trash floating everywhere. There were also many mopeds driving through the narrow streets and souks which are both dangerous and annoying. Including cars driving in the narrow streets, where it is not safe and proper. This shows how unsafe the city is. Even for tourists, it was not that suitable, since it mostly offered clothes, which had little tourist interest.

The Government and Municipality of Sidon have neglected preserving and taking care of the place where the city is most known for.



Temple of Echmoun